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ABSTRACT

The focus of this survey, conducted by the Office of Management Studies, is on the seventy-eight university libraries in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). Fifty-two libraries were interviewed by telephone calls which employed a detailed interview guide and produced a profile of practices and interests. All but three of the 25 non-participating libraries were covered by an earlier survey of continuing education. The results of this survey indicate that: (1) Recruitment practices emphasize the tried and true methods of visits to library schools, advertising in trade journals, contacting colleagues, and waiting for unsolicited applications; (2) While everyone likes the idea of staff development, few are providing concentrated organizational support; and (3) Most research libraries are actively recruiting minority staff and examining their employment patterns. The survey was also used to identify ARL member needs which could be met by the Office of Management Studies. The use of the telephone as a survey method is evaluated. Appendix I contains statistical results of the survey and Appendix II gives an annotated list of related materials. (Author/NH)

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ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES

A SURVEY OF THE RECRUITMENT, STAFF DEVELOPMENT, AND MINORITY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES

LI 004 158

THE OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY MANAGEMENT STUDIES

July, 1972

A SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES SURVEY OF THE RECRUITMENT, STAFF DEVELOPMENT, AND MINORITY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES

By D.E. Webster and W. Putnam

I. Introduction

Following the recommendation of the ARL Commission on Management, the Office of Management Studies completed a telephone survey of ARL members. The purpose of the survey was to secure information on the needs and requirements of members in three specific areas: recruitment, staff development, and minority employment. In order to reach this objective the survey aimed at securing a better picture of what the current practices of research libraries are in these areas.

The survey focused on the seventy-eight university libraries in the ARL. Fifty-two libraries were studied via an hour-long telephone call that employed a detailed interview guide and produced a profile of practices and interests. Of the twenty-five libraries that requested not to participate, all but three were covered by an earlier survey of continuing education completed by David Kaser.

As a result of this investigation, the office has a better understanding of the constraints and problems faced by university libraries as they strive to better their approaches in these management areas. The following observations summarize some of these difficulties. More importantly, the work has suggested areas of action in which the Office of Management Studies can provide support to member libraries. In the next few months the office, with the advice of the ARL Commission on Management, will design an ARL program response to the issues identified here.

II. Observations of Current Practices in Recruitment

Certain factors affect recruiting activities and seem to be common to nearly all ARL libraries. Several have developed only recently and they are worth noting in order to understand library practices. On the one hand, the job market is flooded with beginning librarians at a time when research libraries are much less active in recruiting recent library school graduates. In addition, staff turnover has plummeted. In many situations there is no turnover at all. Job mobility is quickly becoming extinct as the opportunities for change grow fewer and the desire for security becomes more acute. Furthermore, the budget constraints present in many institutions are forcing cutbacks in present staffing levels and frequently prevent the addition of new positions, particularly entry level positions. A rather common occurance is a freeze on all hiring, new or replacement.

On the other hand, it is still difficult to locate and attract mid-level, advanced, and specialized staff members. While library schools provide help and information for beginning librarians, there is no clearinghouse of information on the mid-career librarian. An example of this type of help is the Modern Language Association's service that disseminates information on a selective basis about vacancies and prospective candidates.

In another area, everyone wants to recruit members of minority groups but many libraries cannot find or attract them. At the same time, there appears to be growing tension on the part of personnel officers, and possibly the general staff, in relation to the need to employ minority group members while facing a static employment situtation. This often requires a form of reverse discrimination.

These factors, particularly the effect of the current economic situation and the tight job market, have resulted in a de-emphasis of the

recruitment efforts of most research libraries, especially for entry-level positions.

The telephone survey looked at the nature of the recruitment activity in research libraries by inquiring about (1) the techniques used to locate potential employees, (2) the means by which candidates are attracted, and (3) the approaches used to determine staffing requirements.

The overwhelming impression resulting from a review of these current practices is that research libraries have established patterns of recruitment that have met past needs but are increasingly strained to meet the changed employment conditions and the demands of university affirmative action plans. Furthermore, libraries find it difficult to conduct active long-range or even short-range manpower planning.

Recruitment practices emphasize the tried and true methods of visits to library schools, advertising in trade journals that are normally read by academic librarians, contacting colleagues, and waiting for applications to come unsolicited. With the exception of several active affirmative action plans, little attempt is made to identify special employment groups and then to design positions and methods to locate them. For example: the number of advanced degree subject specialists looking for jobs is assumed to be quite high. Yet libraries, although professing a desire to get these competancies, do not know where to look for them, how to attract them to library careers, or how to incorporate them into present job classification schemes.

Manpower planning as a management approach is difficult for most research librarians to accomplish. The obvious constraints of the university environment make it difficult to systematically: (1) assess, on a continuing basis, the skills, experience, and capability of individuals in

all levels of the library staff, (2) project staff requirements over one year, three years, five years, and other long-term periods, (3) determine staff skills and potential that should be recruited now to meet future operation requirements, and finally, and (4) plan the staff development efforts needed to move present staff toward future roles. Libraries are prevented from doing this because, for the most part, they do not have the resources or university support for doing it. The financial difficulties faced by higher education are changing this response, and more universities are looking for the benefits of manpower planning. At the same time, libraries need to change their attitudes toward assessing their staff needs, locating potential candidates, and then attracting these individuals with meaningful, challenging work with career potential.

III. Observations on Current Practices in Staff Development

It is not as easy to generalize concerning the current practices at research libraries in the area of staff development. This is due partially to the difficulty of defining what is meant by or included in staff development. For the purpose of this survey, we looked at three categories of organizational support for the development of staff capabilities: (1) training programs to upgrade or secure skills required to perform defined job responsibilities, (2) supervisory and management development programs sponsored by or participated in by the organization and (3) opportunities offered by the library for the individual to secure additional subject and professional knowledge.

Everyone likes the idea of staff development, but very few are providing concentrated organizational support. The prevailing philosophy generally is that it is the individual's responsibility for developing himself. Again, this has worked in the past, but in many instances the

uncoordinated efforts at individual self-development do not produce the staff capabilities necessary for the library to maintain its performance or, for this matter, meet the challenges of the future. Secondly, there is a growing need to assist the majority of library staff who need some guidance and career counseling, and possibly some motivation, in order to participate constructively in staff development activities.

The survey illustrates the fact that libraries face a number of problems in helping the individual who wants to pursue a career plan involving staff development. The financial picture at the moment seems to prevent much innovation, experimentation, and improvement of practices. There are reports of restrictions on out-of-state travel and travel funds, no remission of fees for course work, suspension of work-study programs, restrictions on the nature and types of course work that can be done, and little advice or assistance in directing staff development toward individual career goals.

In addition to the difficulty of planning a coordinated staff development effort, most libraries are unable to provide opportunities for staff career mobility. This may be movement from category to category (clerk to paraprofessional, for example) or even within these categories (for instance, a career progression of positions with increasing responsibility combined with a variety of experiences). The old problem of career and financial advancement existing only as a function of administrative responsibilities continues unsolved in most situations. The size of most ARL libraries is one reason for this. They just are not big enough to move people around freely. These problems are well known but increasingly research libraries are becoming interested in overcoming them.

The component of staff development of greatest interest to those interviewed is in-service training. The majority of libraries surveyed simply do not have the resources to develop their own in-service training programs. The university does not provide the money and no one on the staff is a specialist at developing, testing or implementing such a program. Nevertheless, there is general agreement that well designed academic library oriented in-service training programs would be very useful. Topics most frequently suggested for coverage in such programs are human relations and communications for supervisors, principles of academic library management, and overviews of library operations for nonprofessionals.

Eleven libraries of the fifty-five surveyed have taken some steps toward in-service training programs. In each case these programs have gained the cooperation of either the University Personnel Training Office or the Business School or both, as the library went about setting up and conducting the training effort.

These several institutions may provide some guidance in the development of more generalizable models. The Management Studies Office anticipates following up the brief telephone survey with a closer look at these libraries.

IV. Observations on Current Practices in Minority Group and Women Employment

Because of federal governmental pressure that causes university concern for demonstrative efforts in the affirmative action areas, most research libraries are actively recruiting minority staff and examining their employment patterns.

To be more precise, if we discount the two Canadian libraries surveyed (because they are not under any pressure to participate in an AAP) and Howard University's Library (whose staff is mainly Black), a total of thirty-five of the fifty libraries surveyed are participating in affirmative action plans. All of the rest either plan to participate or are attempting to comply with Equal Opportunity guidelines. Forty-seven of the fifty libraries were able to report over the telephone exactly how many Black professionals they have on their staffs. The total is sixty-six. Fifteen of the forty-seven reported no Black professionals, although in each case Black professionals were actively being recruited in compliance with Affirmative Action Plans and Office of Education guidelines.

Some of the reported problems in recruiting Black professionals were:

- The library has begun participating in an Affirmative Action Program at a time when professional vacancies are relatively few.
- Participants in special minority programs at library schools often are either not interested in or not qualified for a career in academic librarianship. Not qualified here often means lacking foreign language expertise.
- Despite advertisements in Black newspapers and journals, very few Blacks ever apply for any given position.
- The competition among research libraries for mid-career Black professionals for higher level positions is such that many libraries despair of recruiting Blacks except at the entry-level. But then they are open to criticism for not trying to recruit Blacks for higher level positions.
- Most libraries express concern that the pressure to find more Black librarians will result in raiding the Black college libraries or in taking their best people.

It is generally the case that it is much easier to recruit minority members for clerical positions than it is for professional positions. In these instances, the library has the assistance of either the University Personnel Office or of the State Civil Service Commission in recruiting

minority clerical employees, and there is a local labor pool to draw upon.

An aspect of affirmative action that many libraries are beginning to stress is the need to recruit women for top-level administrative positions in libraries. The problem here is described in the abstract of a Report on the Status of Women Employed in the Library of the University of California, Berkeley, with Recommendations for Affirmative Action which argues that:"(1) library professional, technical, and clerical personnel -- both women and men - work in 'women's occupations,' and, therefore, are underpaid when compared to those employed in 'men's occupations' which require similar backgrounds of education and experience; (2) within their respective categories of Librarian and Library Assistant, women are concentrated at the lowest levels; and (3) the opportunities for women to advance in their library careers are apparently diminishing."

In those parts of the country where Chicanos and American Indians make up a significant portion of the minority population, libraries report great difficulty in recruiting professionals of these respective ethnic origins. It has been pointed out that the minority programs at library schools now tend to emphasize Blacks and that the number of American Indians and Chicanos in such programs is low.

One observation that can be made after a review of several affirmative action programs is that pressures on library administrators to take concrete steps in improving the employment conditions for minorities and women in libraries is actually forcing adoption of good management practices. These include: qualitative analysis of present staff configurations, determination and dissemination of library and university personnel policies, and the establishment of concrete specific library and organizational unit goals.

V. Possible Responses of the ARL/OMS to Results of Survey

One of the basic objectives of the telephone survey was to identify needs and requirements of ARL members that could be met by the Office of Management Studies. Based on an initial review of the results, several activities deserve consideration as possible programs for the office or for development as proposals for funding support. Six questions are presently considered as requiring additional thought and development:

1. Can additional recruitment and developmental methods be designed in order to attract minorities into academic librarianship? This is the tough nut for research libraries. In most cases, libraries do very well with employing minorities in the clerical and paraprofessional ranges. But when it comes to the professional levels, the situation is the reverse. The overwhelming conclusion to be drawn from the survey is the AAPs have made no quantitative difference in the number of Black librarians working in research libraries. It seems that this is not an attitudinal problem or the result of a lack of effort on the part of these libraries. There is very little that an individual library might do to meet the general unavailability of minority group librarians. Instead, what is clearly needed is a major national effort to locate, identify, develop, and place promising Blacks in the field of academic librarianship.

2. Can a model staff development program be designed for adoption and use by member libraries that would encompass how to plan for and begin such a program, -- an in-service training manual, supervisory development course, materials and seminars, budget and staff requirements, guidelines for operating that would cover career planning, performance appraisal, and counseling?

3. Should a national training center for staff development officers be established to provide libraries with outside assistance in developing an in-house capability to train and upgrade their staff?

4. Can "instructional modules" be developed that would be packaged course work focusing on topics and utilizing a problem-solving format for use by libraries?

5. How should the ARL develop and conduct regional seminars, workshops, discussion forums, and conferences aimed at management development in research libraries?

6. Can fellowships be established to survey current practices in areas such as performance appraisal, use of committees, and manpower planning?

VI. Evaluation of the Methodology

An evaluation of the survey methodology is necessary since this attempt to secure information on the current question of ARL members in the management area is the first of several planned surveys and because the survey experimented with using the telephone as the means of contacting members.

On March 16, 1972 the office mailed to the directors of the seventy-eight university libraries who belong to ARL a memorandum requesting their participation in a survey of recruitment and staff development activities. The memorandum set forth the areas to be covered by the survey and indicated that the survey would be conducted by telephone during the month of April. Tear sheets were provided for replying to the memorandum, and the directors were asked to say whether their respective libraries would participate and, if so, who should be telephoned.

The office prepared two information-gathering instruments to be used in the survey. The first was an interview guide that encompassed a detailed set of questions to be used by the interviewer in conducting the telephone call. The second tool was a tabulating form which was used to summarize, under general headings, a profile of the participating libraries.

Of the seventy-eight university libraries belonging to ARL, fifty-two took part in the survey. Several of the libraries that declined to participate forwarded brief notes on the tear sheet saying that they were,

of course, interested in matters of recruitment and staff development but for a number of reasons their activities in these areas are such that, in their opinion, the situation did not warrant a long-distance telephone interview.

A librarian from the ARL Slavic Center, Bill Putnam, agreed to work on the survey and conducted the telephone interviews. These interviews produced descriptive profiles of each institution's practices in the several topics covered. The interviews were completed in a three-week period -- April 14 through May 5.

In evaluation, it is found that this type of data-gathering effort:

- Allowed survey completion in a very short time frame.
- Provided some personal interaction and exchange of information.
- Was a reasonably inexpensive way to secure a large amount of data.
- Provided clues to what institutions should be looked at more closely.
- Indicated to the membership the nature of the office's interest in several management areas.
- Secured for the office a better appreciation of the needs and requirements of member libraries.
- Identified key staff in member libraries interested in topics.
- Produced a variety of documents sent by libraries to the office.

This experiment demonstrated that with some support a junior professional can effectively execute a survey of a defined, limited topic in a short period of time. Furthermore, the survey is stimulating ideas for future office activity.

APPENDIX I

Statistical Results of Survey

1. Participation in the survey

   - 66% of all ARL university members participated in the telephone survey. Staff from the Office of Management Studies talked to either the director or the chief administrator concerned with the libraries' activities in these areas.

   - 75% of all ARL university members participated in a 1970 survey of continuing education conducted by Dave Kaser. This involved a one-page questionnaire. The results are reported in the July, 1971 Library Trends.

   - Of the 52 libraries that participated in the office survey 14 were small-sized (total staff in the range of 77-153), 18 were medium-sized (total staff in the range of 157-245), and 20 were large-sized (total staff of 263-891). This suggests that the medium-sized and larger libraries are more active and interested in these areas.

2. New employee orientation sessions

   - 32 libraries regularly provide a formal orientation effort for new staff. This represents 40% of the membership (11 small, 7 medium, 14 large).

3. Skill training

   - 30 libraries (38% of membership) offer some sort of basic skill training in addition to normal on-the-job training. This may involve skills ranging from key punching to bibliographic searching.

4. Management development efforts

   - Some sort of in-house supervisory development course is now provided by 30 libraries, of which half are the large-sized institutions.

   - 70% of the libraries surveyed provide at least occasional opportunity to attend workshops, courses, seminars outside of the library.

   - 5 ARL libraries are operating management development efforts that are tied into either graduate business schools or graduate library schools.

- Only 3 libraries provide all of the above as part of their regular staff development efforts.

5. Opportunities for academic course work in a subject or for a degree

   - Only 4 libraries do not offer this option to staff. However, in most cases, staff members not holding professional status must take advantage of this option on their own time.

6. Financial support for staff development

   - Very few libraries have a discrete budget allocation for staff development or utilizing a staff training officer. Generally these items are unrecognized or buried elsewhere.

7. Affirmative action plans

   - 35 ARL libraries are presently active in formal affirmative action plans. Almost all of the remainder are getting into these efforts.

8. Work study activities

   - 18 ARL libraries provide opportunity for promising staff to work and pursue a library degree as part of a conscious effort to recruit librarians.

9. Special minority training or recruitment activities

   - 8 ARL libraries are presently experimenting with ways to attract and train minority staff via internships, work study program, and unusual advertising efforts.

10. Manpower planning

    - In almost all cases, concerted efforts to complete long-range manpower planning are absent.

APPENDIX II

For Ideas on Approaches to Problems in these Several Areas the Following Materials are Suggested

A. Recruitment and Staff Development

Desatnick, Robert L. A Concise Guide to Management Development. New York: American Management Association, 1970.

"Management by objectives" methods are directed toward improving the performance and potential of administrators. The author describes a goals-oriented system of management development that includes an overall manpower plan and individual career plans. He provides criteria that can be used in measuring the effectiveness of a staff development effort.

Finkle, Robert B. and Jones, William S. Assessing Corporate Talent: A Key to Managerial Manpower Planning. New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970.

The authors argue for better methods of evaluating information on the skills and capabilities of personnel. They do this by developing a manpower planning approach that builds on managerial intuition by incorporating research results from the behavioral sciences. For example, testing and assessment techniques that have proven successful in practice are described with examples of how they are applied. The book also includes comments on peer ratings (p. 111) as a part of the selection and promotion process.

Fordyce, Jack K. and Weil, Raymond. Managing with People: A Managers Handbook of Organization Development Methods. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1971.

The topic of "organization development" is the heart of this book. These are methods aimed at improving interpersonal and group dynamics skills

for staff in organizations that are coping with the demands of a changing environment. A particularly useful section deals with characteristics of healthy organization and suggests techniques for reaching that state.

Lopez, Felix M. The Making of a Manager: Guidelines to his Selection and Promotion. New York: American Management Association, 1970.

This work deals with how to identify, develop, and motivate supervisory and administrative talent. After briefly examining the role and activities of managerial staff, the author presents an innovative framework for defining and developing effective managers. His thesis is that society's managerial crisis is not a matter of the numbers or the quality of managers; rather, it is a problem of how managers are made and utilized.

Stone, Elizabeth,Ed. "Personal Development and Continuing Education", Library Trends, July, 1971.

An extraordinary collection of articles addressing the problems of staff development in libraries and suggesting avenues for securing changes and improvement.

B. Affirmative Action Efforts

Conwell, Mary and Jackson, Ade. "Report on Recruitment of Minorities." Available from authors, New York Public Library, Mimeographed 1972.

Staff from NYPL after attending an ALA pre-conference held in Dallas, Texas, June 17-19, 1971 developed a list of recommendations and suggestions for recruiting, selecting, hiring, and promoting minorities. There are ideas here that personnel officers and library directors will find useful in their own settings.

Heyns, Roger W. "Sex Discrimination and Contract Compliance." An A.C.E. Special Report. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1972.

A report to the higher education community concerning the federal regulations in this area and describing the issues involved for a university faced with a governmental review of its efforts to comply with these requirements. Copies of this report are not available from ACE but were distributed earlier by the ARL office to library directors.

University of California, Berkeley. Library Affirmative Action Program for Women Committee. A Report on the Status of Women Employed in the Library of the University of California, Berkeley, with Recommendations for Affirmative Action. Berkeley, California: Author, 1971.

An excellent, well-researched report that relates the treatment of women in the library labor force nationally to the situation at Berkeley. Specific suggestions for improving these conditions are made in the areas of: hiring and recruitment, in-service training and career development, and educational opportunities. The statistical tables and the discussion of issues makes this work valuable to other libraries interested in addressing problems in this area. Copies are available for $2.00 prepaid, from Anne Lipow, Chairman of the AAPWC.

Young, Richard A. Recruiting and Hiring Minority Employees. New York: American Management Association, 1969.

The theme of this book is that traditional employment methods applied to minority groups are wasteful and counter-productive. An attempt is made to identify common problems encountered by prospective employers as well as the feelings and attitudes of the individuals that are being recruited.

Successful techniques are then described with case illustrations of how they work. For example, one of the basic barriers to minority employment is the reluctance of minorities to apply for certain jobs because of

past hiring practices. Locating and interviewing methods are suggested to overcome this problem. The author is a Black and speaks from numerous years of experience. The suggestions range from means of identifying potential staff to how best to orientate new staff. Library recruiters will find these suggestions useful for both support and professional staff.